



# Shin Splints

Front of Shin Type

Common Lower Limb Functional Disorders

**2 of 6**

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## SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

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This condition usually occurs within the muscle belly at the front of the shin. Typically a cramping type pain develops in the upper 1/3 of the front of the leg during repetitive actions such as road running or fast walking but will settle down quickly following rest. Besides from the pain, the main concern from this condition is the lack of enjoyment to pursue such leisure activities as this discomfort occurs each time the activity is undertaken.

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## WHAT'S GOING ON?

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The muscle called *tibialis anterior* in the front of your shin, when functioning normally, permits both the carefully controlled landing of your foot during contact onto the ground and also holds your foot off the ground as the leg swings through the air preventing you from tripping during walking or running.

The main cause of this type of shin splints can be associated with weakness of this muscle. Whenever a weakened muscle is forced to perform extra work then this weakness will cause cramping and pain in the overworked muscle belly.

Occasionally, tibialis anterior may have good strength but an uncontrolled collapsing long-arch of your foot can be the root cause of overworking this muscle belly.

With your long-arch collapsing excessively, your foot is contacting the ground uncontrollably while walking or running. The muscle in the front of your shin has to perform more work associated with this extra and unwanted movement.

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## HOW IS IT TREATED?

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Treatment consists of specific strengthening routines, which involves you sitting on a desk and hooking the front of your foot through the handle of an old paint tin. The tin can is filled with some sand. By using the muscle at the front of the shin the tin is lifted up and down slowly. This action is repeated until the front of shin develops pain. You then stop until the pain subsides and you repeat the routine for five times.



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Following this routine twice daily will eventually provide normal strength for your tibialis anterior muscle.

Where the strength of your muscle is good but you still suffer from this type of shin splints then a pair of custom foot orthoses will help control how your foot lands onto the ground controlling any excessive long-arch collapse. Although a break-in period is required for the wearing of such custom foot orthoses you will find the shin splints settling quite quickly with the use of these prescription devices.